

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

THE SENIORS HEALTH CHOICE PRESERVATION ACT

HON. MARK FOLEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 11, 2000

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing the Seniors Health Choice Preservation Act. This bill will protect Medicare+Choice HMOs from additional payments cuts. Furthermore, the bill will assist Medicare HMO's that cover preservation drugs so that they can continue to provide this important benefit.

I believe we have a commitment to America's seniors to provide dependable health care through the Medicare program.

I strongly supported giving seniors more options and flexibility when I voted for Medicare+Choice in the Balanced Budget Act.

Empowering consumers to choose their care is the best way to improve quality and affordability in the health care system.

Unfortunately, more than 700,000 Medicare beneficiaries in Medicare+Choice HMOs nationwide have had their coverage either disrupted or discontinued over the past two years.

In some congressional districts—like mine—many seniors were forced to return to fee-for-service Medicare because there were no other options in this area. Even in areas that still have Medicare HMOs, seniors have been hit with increased out-of-pocket costs and reduced benefits.

Seniors in my district love their HMOs. They get things like prescription drug coverage, dental care, and eye exams and glasses. At a time when HMOs are getting a bad rap in a lot of places, we want to keep our HMOs in Florida.

Unfortunately, the policies of the Health Care Financing Administration are making this very hard to do. They have taken some well-intentioned provisions in the Balanced Budget Act and twisted them in order to cut payments to the HMOs who need it most, forcing them to leave certain areas—like rural areas—where they can't cover their expenses.

Even though we provided these HMOs with some relief last year, we need to build on this work to guarantee that current and future generations of Medicare beneficiaries have a strong health care system that offers them choices in how they receive care.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Seniors Health Choice Preservation Act in order to preserve their constituents health care choices and to prevent future crisis for seniors on Medicare.

COMMENDING JAMES SPELLMAN, SR. OF PAWCATUCK, CONNECTICUT

HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 11, 2000

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, today I commend Mr. James Spellman, Sr. of Pawcatuck, Connecticut for more than five decades of public service on behalf of his Town, State and Country. On April 28, Mr. Spellman will mark his 80th birthday.

Mr. Spellman has dedicated the better part of his adult life in roles assisting the residents of his community and beyond. He served as a member of the Board of Education between 1948 and 1953. From 1955 and 1961, he was Judge on the Stonington Town Court. In 1961, Mr. Spellman was elected to his initial term as First Selectman. He would be reelected to this position successively for another 11-terms until he stepped down in 1985. His long tenure is a testament to the excellence of his service which was marked by innovation, foresight and a balanced stewardship of Town affairs.

During those years, the Town of Stonington went through a period of considerable growth, adding three new schools, a police station and a significant amount of public infrastructure necessary to serve a growing population and to respond to economic development fueled by the tourism industry. Throughout his career as Chief Elected Official and Chief Administrative Officer, Mr. Spellman was known for his concern for all segments of the community, his willingness to respond to constituent needs at all times of the day and night, and his sincerity in pursuing the duties of the office.

Jim Spellman has also served his nation in a number of capacities. He was in the Navy in the Pacific during World War II. He was a member of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission for nearly 15 years. In this assignment, he worked to ensure that the region's fishery resources would be healthy for existing and future generations of fishermen from Stonington and throughout southeastern Connecticut.

Mr. Speaker, James Spellman, Sr. has a record of service to his community that few will ever equal. Although he no longer holds formal positions on boards or commissions, he continues to remain active in the community offering his bountiful experience and energy to help Stonington in the Twenty First Century. I joint citizens in Stonington in wishing him all the best in the years ahead.

HONORING STEVEN T. KOIKE

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 11, 2000

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, today I honor Steven T. Koike for being named the re-

cipient of the second annual Award for Outstanding Achievement, by the Friends of Agricultural Extension.

The Friends of Agricultural Extension is a volunteer group that supports the Agricultural Extension program in the San Joaquin Valley. Each year Friends of Agricultural Extension publicly recognizes the author of an outstanding program in adaptive research and extension, which addresses a problem or opportunity facing production agriculture. This year, Koike's program, on the subject "Research and Education about Spinach Diseases: A Model for Responding to the Needs of Growers of Minor Crops in California", has been selected.

Steven T. Koike serves as the Plant Pathology Farm Advisor for Monterey County as well as the counties of Santa Cruz and San Benito. Koike's research specializes in regional diagnosis of diseases of vegetables and floral plants.

Koike, in assuming the position he now holds, brought to the region the vision of a country-based pathology laboratory to provide rapid diagnostic and research services to the farming community.

Koike envisioned and brought into being (through grants, industry support, and county resources) a pathology laboratory fully equipped to deal with most fungal, bacterial, and nematode pests.

Steven T. Koike, with the laboratory in place, is able to provide California farmers timely and accurate diagnostic methods, serving growers and farm advisors from no less than 15 California counties.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to honor Mr. Steven T. Koike for his extraordinary research in the field of plant pathology, and to congratulate him on being named the recipient of the second annual Award for Outstanding Achievement. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing Mr. Koike many more years of continued success.

AMERICAN HOMEOWNERSHIP AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2000

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1776) to expand homeownership in the United States:

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment by my estimable colleague from California, Congresswoman WATERS.

As a former Mayor of a large city, I know a thing or two about depending on Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and the HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) to pay for services and housing for

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